

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 08570 181715Z

62

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 8570

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB PINT GR

SUBJECT: COMMUNIST SLATE WINS CONSTRUCTION WORKERS ELECTION

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1. THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS FEDERATION, ONE OF GREECES MOST POWERFUL (CLAIMED 200,000 MEMBERS) AND MILITANT LABOR ORGANIZATIONS, ELECTED COMMUNIST-BACKED LEADERS TO A THREE YEAR TERM ON AUG 9. DIAMANDIS MAVRIDOGLU, ELECTED BY THE FEDERATIONS FIRST POST-JUNTA CONGRESS AS SECY GENERAL, AND THE NEW MEMBERS OF THE 20 MAN GENERAL COUNCIL AND FIVE MAN SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE ARE ALL MEMBERS OF THE UNITED SYNDICALIST ANTI-DICTATORIAL MOVEMENT (ESAK), THE TRADE UNION ORGAN OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE EXTERIOR (KKE-EXTERIOR).
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2. THE ELECTION IS VIEWED AS A DEFEAT FOR MINISTER OF LABOR LASKARIS WHO REPORTEDLY ARRANGED COVERT FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE UNSUCCESSFUL INCUMBENT CONSTANTINOS LYKIARDOPOULOS, LEADER OF THE FEDERATION BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE JUNTA PEIORD. (IN FACT, LASKARIS CONFIRMED
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 ATHENS 08570 181715Z

TO US PERSONALLY THAT HE HAD MADE AN ALL OUT EFFORT TO

ASSIST THOSE OPPOSING THE COMMUNISTS BUT WITHOUT SUCCESS.)
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3. ANOTHER LOSER WAS A COALITION BAKED BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE INTERIOR (KKE-INTERIOR) AND THE PANHELLENIC SOCIALIST MOVEMENT (PASOK). PRIOR TO THE ELECTION, THE COALITION HAD SUGGESTED A LARGER COALITION WITH ESAK AGAINST THE INCUMBENT LEADERSHIP. HOWEVER, THE TWO GROUPS COULD NOT REACH AGREEMENT ON THE DIVISION OF LEADERSHIP POSITIONS SHOULD THEY BE SUCCESSFUL, AND ESAK, PERHAPS WITH AN ACCURATE ASSESSMENT OF ITS CHANCES, WENT AHEAD TO WIN ALONE UNDER AN ELECTORAL SYSTEM WHICH GIVES ALL POSITIONS TO THE FACTION RECEIVING THE LARGEST NUMBER OF VOTES.

4. FOLLOWING THE ELECTION, THE CONFEDERATION CONGRESS VOTED TO INSTITUTE A SYSTEM OF PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION UNDER WHICH IN FUTURE ELECTIONS, OFFICES WILL BE ALLOCATED TO EACH FACTION IN PROPORTION TO THE NUMBER OF VOTES EACH GARNERS.

THE CONGRESS ALSO CALLED FOR THE REAFFILIATION OF ALL LOCAL UNIONS WHICH WERE EXPELLED DURING THE JUNTA PERIOD.

5. THE VOTE FOR FEDERATION OFFICERS WAS SPLIT AS FOLLOWS: ESAK FACTION - 217, LYKIARDOPOULOS FACTION - 175, AND THE KKE-INTERIOR/PASOK COALITION - 92. THE VOTE TO AMEND THE FEDERATIONS CONSTITUTION, TO PROVIDE FOR A SYSTEM OF PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION IN FUTURE ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS OF THE FEDERATION, WAS 373 TO 37. ESAK AND THE OTHER LEFTIST TRADE UNION GROUPS HAVE FAVORED THE SYSTEM OF PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION CONSISTENTLY IN THE POST-JUNTA PERIOD AS THE BEST WAY TO GET A FOOTHOLD IN TRADE UNION AND, ESAK'S SUCCESS IN THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS FEDERATION ELECTIONS NOTWITHSTANDING, SUPPORTED IT IN THIS CASE. ON THE OTHER HAND, MOST NON-COMMUNIST TRADE UNIONISTS HAVE PREFERRED THE MAJORITY (WINNER TAKE ALL) SYSTEM AS A WAY OF KEEPING THE COMMUNISTS FROM OFFICE. OBVIOUSLY, HOWEVER, IN THE FACE OF THE STRONG COMMUNIST SHOWING IN THE ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF THE

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PAGE 03 ATHENS 08570 181715Z

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS FEDERATION, MOST NON-COMMUNISTS VOTED FOR PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION IN ORDER TO HAVE THE POSSIBILITY OF AT LEAST GAINING SOME REPRESENTATION, IN THE FUTURE, IN THE FEDERATION'S GOVERNING BODIES.

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